



# MONGOLIAN OVERLAND ADVENTURE: ACROSS THE MONGOLIAN PLAINS

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**Aug 1-15, 2024**



## TRIP SUMMARY



If you are looking for exploring the extensive Mongolian plains and learn about nomadic culture in depth, this quest might be suitable for you. For centuries, explorers arranged quests to discover its wildlife and sought to traverse across its vast land on horse or camel. Our expedition begins in the northern Lake Hovsgol region, where Mongolia's crystal clear Lake Hovsgol awaits you. Our journey then continues onto Zavkhan province, which is one of Mongolia's few remaining unexplored corners. We will then traverse across the northern Gobi plains to the towering sand dunes. Our quest concludes with a dinosaur fossil prospecting journey and a nomadic encounter with horse breeding family. This expedition will take us through best known lakes and river systems of central and northern Mongolia and concludes in the Gobi Desert.

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1, AUG 1: ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at the Chinggis Khan International Airport in Ulaanbaatar, meet your guide and transfer to your hotel. After resting in your hotel room, enjoy a brief city tour including a visit to Zaisan Hill where you can get a magnificent bird's eye view of the city. This old Soviet period relic is a popular place for locals to hang out and offers great panoramic views of the entire city.

In the evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at one of the city's fine local restaurants.

Overnight at hotel. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; D)

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### DAY 2, AUG 2: ULAANBAATAR



We will spend this day exploring sights and sounds of Mongolia's capital. We will begin this morning with a private blessing with a Buddhist monk at Gandan, the country's largest monastery. An imposing 90-foot-tall statue of Megjid Janraisag (Avalokitesvara in Sanskrit) stands in the largest temple in the monastery. This statue is considered as the religious symbol of Mongolia's independence and democracy after the country's democratic transition of 1990. When a Mongolian student in the mid-1990s discovered

fragments of the original statue (which was destroyed by Soviet authorities in the 1930s) in St. Petersburg, a nationwide campaign began to collect money for rebuilding the Buddha. After years of hard work, this magnificent Buddha was resurrected and is now standing proudly, as a symbol of Mongolian Buddhist heritage.

Next, we will visit the National History Museum located in downtown Ulaanbaatar. This museum offers an excellent introduction to Mongolia's history from pre-historic times through the 13th century Mongolian Empire, and on to the democratic movement of the early 1990s, which overthrew the Communist regime. After lunch, we will visit the Zanabazar's Fine Arts Museum with its excellent collection of Mongolia's arts, including golden Buddha statues of 17th century and some of the best preserved tankas in the world.

In the evening, enjoy a wonderful performance of traditional Mongolian music and dance, featuring Khoomii or "throat" singing, followed by dinner at a fine local restaurant.

(Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

### **DAY 3, AUG 3: ULAANBAATAR - LAKE HOVSGOL**

After breakfast, fly north to the Lake Hovsgol, known also as the “dark blue pearl” of Mongolia. The magnificent Lake Hovsgol, one of the most scenic regions in the country, is located at the foothills of the breathtaking Horidal Saridag Mountains to the west and a Siberian larch forest to the east. After our arrival in Muron (1.5 hour flight), the capital of Hovsgol province, we drive north to our ger camp located on the shore of the lake.

(About 3 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

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### **DAY 4, AUG 4: LAKE HOVSGOL**



After breakfast, enjoy a full day of horseback riding along the lakeshore. We will start riding south and return to the camp from its northern direction by making a large loop. There will be plenty of opportunities to stop and explore the local flora and fauna along the route. Overnight in gers.

(Ger Camp; B, L, D)

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### **DAY 5, AUG 5: LAKE HOVSGOL / TELMEN LAKE**



We will begin our overland expedition southwest to Telmen Lake, surrounded by nomadic summer camps. This part of the country is crisscrossed by mountain streams, large rivers, forested mountains and nomadic summer camps. Overnight in tents.

(Approx. 300km; Tent Camp; B, L, D)

## **DAY 6, AUG 6: TELMEN / KHAR NUUR LAKE**



Today, we will drive to the Khar Nuur Lake of Zavkhan province which is situated in a beautiful landscape, surrounded by sand dunes and towering mountains in the near distance.

Overnight in tents. (Approx.200km; Tent Camp; B, L, D)

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## **DAY 7, AUG 7: KHAR NUUR**

We will spend one full day exploring the sights and sounds of the surrounding area. Enjoy walking along the lake shore and exploring the local flora and fauna.

Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

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## **DAY 8, AUG 8: KHAR NUUR / ULIASTAI / OTGONTENGER**



After breakfast, we will drive to the towering Otgontenger mountain base, the highest peak in Central Mongolia. The locals revere it as a holy mountain. Overnight in tents. Nomads for generations, have camped and lived around this mountain, which offers rich pasture land and abundant food supply.

(Tent Camp; B, L, D)

### **DAY 9, AUG 9: OTGONTENGER / OTGON SUM / BUU TSAGAAN SOUM**

From the base of majestic Otgontenger Mountain, we will drive through tall mountain passes and horse pasture lands to the Bayanhongor province. We will camp near Boon Tsagaan Nuur Lake.

Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

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### **DAY 10, JAUG 10: BUUN TSAGAAN NUUR LAKE / BICHIGTYN KHAD PETROGLYPHS**



Our journey today will bring us to the northern borders of Gobi Desert. Here, we will visit what is considered as one of the richest and most magnificent petroglyphs of Mongolia.

Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

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### **DAY 11, AUG 11: BICHIGTYN KHAD / HONGORYN ELS**



From Bichigtyn Khad, we will drive to the western part of the Gobi where the towering Hongoryn Els sand dunes exist. Enjoy climbing to the tallest of the dunes.

Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

## DAY 12, AUG 12: YOL VALLEY /FLAMING CLIFFS



In the morning, drive to the Yol Valley located in the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park, named after the raptor bird the bearded vulture or lammergeier. Yol Valley is one of the most beautiful valleys in the park and strolling through the gorge could allow rare spotting of mountain wild sheep and an elusive bird species such as Wallcreeper- *Tichodroma muraria*. Also we will visit the local Natural History Museum located on the entrance.

In the late afternoon, we will drive to the legendary Flaming Cliffs, red sandstone bluffs stretching about 3 km in width, where hundreds of dinosaur fossils have been found. Paleontological expeditions from many countries, including from U.S, Poland, Japan and Russia have worked here in the last 80 years. Each year rain and wind reveal yet more fossils and every summer new discoveries are made. Return to the ger camp in the evening.

Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

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## DAY 13, AUG 13: DELGERKHANGAI SOUM



This morning, we will drive northeast to the Delgerkhangai soum and camp next to our host herder family. We will observe how their train their race horses and taste traditional Mongolian drink, the airag.

Overnight in tents. (Tent camp; B, L, D)

## **DAY 14, AUG 14: ULAANBAATAR**



In the morning, we will transfer to the airport to fly back to Ulaanbaatar for our last day of explorations. Spend the remainder of the day for last-minute shopping and sightseeing. In the evening, we will enjoy a wonderful performance of traditional Mongolian music and dance, featuring Khoomii, or “throat-singing,” followed by farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant.

(Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

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## **DAY 15, AUG 15: DEPARTURE**

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your return flight home. (B)

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**B = Breakfast | L = Lunch | D = Dinner**

**Ger camp = The traditional portable, circular, wooden dwelling used by the nomadic peoples.**

**Field camp = A bit more sophisticated camping/glamping, more permanent in nature.**

**Tent camp = Expedition style, often moving regularly and smaller in size and scale.**

**MONGOLIA QUEST RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ALTER THE ABOVE ITINERARY IF DEEMED NECESSARY.**



## LAND PRICES

Based on 2 participants:	<b>\$3,870 per person</b> , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 3-5 participants:	<b>\$3,650 per person</b> , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 6-9 participants:	<b>\$3,450 per person</b> , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 10+ participants:	<b>\$3,300 per person</b> , standard twin occupancy;
Optional single supplement:	<b>\$650 per person</b>

LAND PRICES INCLUDE:	LAND PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land transportation as indicated in the itinerary based on using a cruiser jeep;</li> <li>• Domestic flights as mentioned;</li> <li>• Accommodation at hotel and standard ger camps throughout;</li> <li>• Airport arrival &amp; departure transfers;</li> <li>• All meals indicated as B, L or D;</li> <li>• All entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary;</li> <li>• Camel and horse riding fees;</li> <li>• English speaking guide throughout your stay;</li> <li>• One soda per person per meal;</li> <li>• A bottled water per person per day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International airfare;</li> <li>• Personal laundry;</li> <li>• Drinks not mentioned in the itinerary;</li> <li>• Travel insurance;</li> <li>• Medical evacuation costs;</li> <li>• Excess baggage charges;</li> <li>• Visa fees;</li> <li>• Gratuities;</li> <li>• Photography and video fees</li> <li>• Any other item not mentioned as included.</li> </ul>

## HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

You may book any trip with us by filling out our Trip Application Form, which you can download using Adobe Acrobat Reader and can send to us as an electronic file via e-mail at

- [Info@MongoliaQuest.com](mailto:Info@MongoliaQuest.com)

All reservations are subject to deposit of \$400 per person. Deposits are refundable until 90 days prior to the start of the program less a \$250 administrative fee. Please arrange a wire transfer to Mongolia Quest bank account as per following instructions:

**Beneficiary name:** MONGOLIA QUEST LLC

**Beneficiary's address:**

Suite #00, Apt.26B, 1st Horoo, 13th Sud-district, Sukhbaatar District,  
Ulaanbaatar 14230, Mongolia;

**Tel:** (976) 7000 9747

**Email:** [info@MongoliaQuest.com](mailto:info@MongoliaQuest.com)

**Beneficiary's account number:** 3005111070

**Beneficiary's bank name:** Golomt bank

**Beneficiary's bank address:**

Monnis branch

3rd floor, Monnis tower, Chinggis avenue

Khoroo #1, Sukhbaatar district

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

**Beneficiary's bank swift code:** GLMTMNUB

Once we receive your trip application form, we will send you information about how to wire your deposit to us, and a confirmation letter with information related with visa and international airfare reservations. You will also receive our pre-departure Travel Guide, which will include information on weather, suggested reading list, a list of items to pack, etc.

About 4 weeks prior to your arrival date, we will send you Final Departure Information which will include your final itinerary along with any other necessary updated information regarding the logistics of your trip.

## PAYMENT AND CANCELLATION POLICY

As mentioned above, a deposit of \$400 per person is required to reserve space for the trip that you have chosen. Full payment is due 90 days prior to the start of the trip. In the case of a cancellation, please contact us in written form.

Notification of cancellation must be received in writing by Mongolia Quest. At the time, we receive your written cancellation, the following penalties will apply:

- **Up to 90 days** prior to departure: **\$250 per person** handling fee;
- **89-60 days** prior to departure: **20% of the trip cost** per person;
- **60-45 days** prior to departure: **50% of the trip cost** per person;
- **44-30 days** prior to departure: **75% of the trip cost**, per person;
- **29 days** prior to departure, or after the trip starts: **no-refund**.

Some airfares may be nonrefundable. Once an expedition has departed, there will be no refunds from MQ for any unused portions of the trip. The above policy also applies to all extensions and independent travel arrangements made in conjunction with this program.

### Tier pricing

Our prices are based on tier pricing. At the time of booking, we will bill you for the amount based on the confirmed number of trip participants. In case the number of travelers increases at the last moment, we will reimburse the balance of your payment in accordance with the corresponding tier pricing, after you return home.

## TRAVEL NOTES

### How to get to Mongolia

The official Mongolian international civil flight carriers Mongolian Airlines or MIAT. Currently it serves flights between Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Frankfurt. Other popular airlines include Asiana, Pusan and Turkish airlines. South Korea is the most common international gateway city to Ulaanbaatar. Mongolian Airlines and Turkish Airlines fly daily to/from Istanbul. If you are coming from Europe, you may also find Turkish Airlines a convenient connection. During the summer season, if no seats are available on any of these major carriers, there are ways to fly to Mongolia through local cities in China and Russia. Please contact us for more information. The seats are usually in high demand and booking needs to be done well in advance.

### Visa Information

U.S, Canadian, Japanese, Australian and citizens of most European counties are allowed to enter Mongolia without a visa for up to 30 days. All other nationals are required to get a visa before entering Mongolia.

#### THE LIST OF THE COUNTRIES TO BE EXEMPTED FROM VISA REQUIREMENTS TO VISIT MONGOLIA UP TO 30 DAYS IN THE YEARS OF 2023-2025

- Czech Republic
- Republic of Austria
- Kingdom of Belgium
- Hungary
- Hellenic Republic
- Kingdom of Denmark
- Kingdom of Spain
- Italian Republic
- Republic of Latvia
- Republic of Lithuania
- Swiss Confederation
- Republic of Bulgaria
- Republic of Ireland
- Republic of Philippines

- Principality of Liechtenstein
- Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- Republic of Malta
- Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Republic of Poland
- Portuguese Republic
- Slovak Republic
- Republic of Slovenia
- Republic of Finland
- Republic of Croatia
- Canada

- Kingdom of Sweden
- French Republic
- Republic of Estonia
- Kingdom of Norway
- Republic of Iceland
- Republic of Cyprus
- Romania
- Principality of Monaco
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Commonwealth of Australia
- New Zealand

## Weather

Mongolia enjoys over 280 sunny days a year. However, because Mongolia has a continental weather pattern, weather can fluctuate drastically during any given day. We recommend packing warm clothes even if you are coming during the hottest months. Our pre-departure information will provide details regarding the weather along with a suggested packing list. Layering is the best plan to be ready for a wide array of Mongolian weather patterns.

## Accommodation



Newly renovated Soviet era hotels are located at some of the best locations in downtown Ulaanbaatar. They offer comfortable rooms and friendly services. There are also newer hotels like Kempinski Khan Palace, Ramada Ulaanbaatar and Best Western Inn. The countryside accommodations are arranged in “ger camps,” which provide authentic nomadic felt tents with centralized bathroom and toilet facilities located nearby. They offer clean, comfortable beds and plentiful meals.

## Safety

Mongolia is devoid of any political, religious and ethnic sectarian conflicts and is considered one of the safest countries in the world for international travelers. However, like in any other country, crimes do happen, so a good sense of caution and respect shown to the locals can help to avoid unnecessary confrontations. Mongolians are generally hospitable people who love to interact with foreigners.

## Food



Mongolia’s capital, Ulaanbaatar, hosts an excellent collection of fine restaurants of international cuisine. In the countryside, tour establishments offer hearty meals with a balance of meat and vegetables. Meat in Mongolians excellent in that the whole country is essentially “free-range” terrain. Even your strictest dietary restrictions can now be met with proper information in advance and preparation by us.

## **Information about Currency and Payment Methods**

Mongolia's national currency is called tugrik and the exchange rate is about 3,400 tugrik to a US dollar. Major currencies can be exchanged at the hotels and pawnshops, and ATM machines are widely available throughout Ulaanbaatar and provincial centers. However, Australian dollars can usually only be exchanged at banks. Traveler's checks can be cashed at banks and major credit cards are accepted at most places in the capital, but only Mongolian cash is accepted in the countryside. We recommend that you travel with Mongolian national currency equal to at least \$200 when touring in the countryside.

## **Souvenirs**

Like any other places, Mongolia offers great souvenirs ranging from camel wool sweaters to cashmere scarves and traditional wooden puzzle games. Mongolian vodkas can be an excellent gift. At several stores, you can also find a range of traditional Mongolian musical instruments such as the famed Morin Khuur or "horse headed fiddle." Bargaining is not very customary; most items are sold for the price on their labels. If you plan to shop for souvenirs, we recommend purchasing locally as many items as possible since your purchases will be a direct contribution to the local community.

## **Travel Insurance**

With Mongolia stretching over 1.5 million square kilometers and its population concentrated in the cities, we will be traveling through some remote areas away from good roads and medical facilities. We strongly recommend that you consider getting standard emergency medical evacuation insurance as a means to protect yourself from unexpected accidents that can happen during any trip. Nothing is better than traveling with peace of mind knowing that you have prepared for the trip as much as possible in advance.

## **Traveling with Mongolia Quest**

Because it is still a developing country, traveling in Mongolia requires a sense of humor and patience. New roads and bridges are being built every year, but the paved road system is still limited in the countryside. You may experience flight delays and find road conditions bumpy and dusty. But the experience of traveling in Mongolia will far exceed some personal compromises in comfort. We like to say that the best part of traveling in Mongolia is spontaneous events and interactions, which lead to unexpected interactions, discoveries, and experiences that will make your trip unique and memorable. At Mongolia Quest, we ensure the integrity of your overall itinerary but at the same time, will go out of our way to make necessary changes in order to enrich your travel experience with us.

**ENJOY YOUR TRIP!**